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AMENDMENT**Amendments to the Claims**

Please amend claim 1. The currently pending claims as amended appear below.

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1 1. (Currently Amended) A method of automating contributions in a gaming system, said
2 method comprising:
3 (a) prompting a user with a gaming option in an automated gaming system;
4 (b) enabling the user to ~~optionally~~ pledge a contribution to an organization, said pledge
5 being contingent on a result of said gaming option, said pledge being input to said automated
6 gaming system;
7 (c) permitting the user to make a wager and partake in the gaming option in said
8 automated gaming system, said automated gaming system determining said result using said
9 wager and gaming option;
10 (d) automatically presenting said result to said user from said automated gaming system,
11 said step (d) being performed after said step (b); and
12 (e) automatically making the contribution to the organization based on the pledge of step
13 (b) and said result.

1 2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein step (b) further comprises allowing the user to
2 select the organization.

1 3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein step (b) further comprises allowing the user to
2 select a size of the contribution.

1 4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the gaming option has a first odds of winning
2 in step (a), and a second odds of winning based on the pledge of step (b).

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1 5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein an odds of winning the gaming option is
2 related to the pledge of step (b).

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the gaming option has a first payout in step (a),
2 and a second payout based on the pledge of step (b).

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1 7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein a payout for winning the gaming option is
2 related to the pledge of step (b).

1 8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of accumulating
2 contributions for the user during a series of gaming activities.

1 9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of automatically providing
2 information regarding the gaming option and the contribution to the Internal Revenue Service.

10-20. (Cancelled)

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21. (Previously Presented) An automated gaming apparatus, comprising:

at least one user input device which receives input selections from a user;

at least one user output device which provides information to said user;

a controller coupled to said at least one user input device and said at least one user output device, said controller controlling the operation of said automated gaming apparatus, said controller executing the steps comprising:

receiving a selection from a user using said at least one user input device to engage in a gaming activity;

allowing said user to make an optional user pledge to an organization using said at least one user input device, said user pledge being contingent on a result of said gaming activity;

determining user proceeds of said gaming activity based on said result;

presenting said result of said gaming activity to said user at said at least one user output device, said presenting step being performed after said step of allowing a user to make an optional user pledge;

if a user makes said optional user pledge, determining whether said result satisfies the contingency of said user pledge; and

if a user makes said optional user pledge and if said result of said gaming activity satisfies the contingency of said optional user pledge, reducing said user proceeds by an amount of said user pledge, and crediting said organization with said amount of said user pledge.

22. (Previously Presented) The gaming apparatus of claim 21, wherein said controller further executes the step of:

interactively prompting said user to make said optional user pledge to an organization using said at least one user output device, said step of interactively prompting being performed before said step of presenting said result of said gaming activity.

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1 23. (Previously Presented) The gaming apparatus of claim 21, wherein said controller further
2 executes the step of:
3 automatically determining said result based on a random process.

1 24. (Previously Presented) The gaming apparatus of claim 23, wherein at least one of (a) a
2 probability that said result will be favorable to said user, and (b) the amount of said user proceeds
3 in the event said result is favorable to said user, are dependent on whether said user makes said
4 optional user pledge.

1 25. (Previously Presented) The gaming apparatus of claim 21, wherein said step of allowing
2 said user to make an optional user pledge comprises allowing said user to select an organization
3 to receive said pledge.

1 26. (Previously Presented) The gaming apparatus of claim 21, wherein said controller further
2 executes the step of:
3 automatically providing information regarding said user proceeds and the amount credited
4 to said organization to the Internal Revenue Service.

1 27. (Previously Presented) The gaming apparatus of claim 21, wherein said at least one user
2 output device and said at least one user input device comprises an interactive visual display
3 terminal.

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28. (Currently Amended) A program product for use in an automated gaming apparatus
having at least one user input device and at least one user output device, comprising:
a plurality of processor-executable instructions recorded on signal-bearing media, wherein
said instructions, when executed by at least one processor of said automated gaming apparatus,
cause the apparatus to perform the steps comprising:
receiving a selection from a user to engage in a gaming activity;
allowing said user to make an optional user pledge to an organization using said at least
one user input device, said user pledge being contingent on a result of said gaming activity;
determining user proceeds of said gaming activity based on said result;
presenting said result of said gaming activity to said user at said at least one user output
device, said presenting step being performed after said step of allowing a user to make an optional
user pledge;
if a user makes said optional user pledge, determining whether said result satisfies the
contingency of said user pledge; and
if a user makes said optional user pledge and if said result of said gaming activity satisfies
the contingency of said optional user pledge, reducing said user proceeds by an amount of said
user pledge, and crediting said organization with said amount of said user pledge.

29. (Previously Presented) The program product of claim 28, wherein said instructions further
cause said apparatus to perform the step of:
interactively prompting said user to make said optional user pledge to an organization
using an interactive display device, said step of interactively prompting being performed before
said step of presenting said result of said gaming activity.

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1 30. (Previously Presented) The program product claim 28, wherein said instructions further
2 cause said apparatus to perform the step of:
3 automatically determining said result based on a random process;
4 wherein at least one of (a) a probability that said result will be favorable to said user, and
5 (b) the amount of said user proceeds in the event said result is favorable to said user, are
6 dependent on whether said user makes said optional user pledge.

1 31. (Previously Presented) The program product of claim 28, wherein said instructions further
2 cause said apparatus to perform the step of:
3 automatically providing information regarding said user proceeds and the amount credited
4 to said organization to the Internal Revenue Service.

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